

Criteria for Cancellation/Suspension of Activity Due to Lightning, Inclement Weather Conditions for the City of Madison

It will be **MANDATORY** to cancel or suspend all activities at City of Madison athletic fields, aquatic facilities and parks if people are in jeopardy due to lightning or inclement weather. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard by a City Employee, officials, umpires or even a parent; at this time, all coaches, officials, spectators, employees, patrons and volunteers in the area must seek shelter immediately. They must go to their vehicles in a quick, but safe manner or a sturdy structure indoors.

It is important to remember, a lightning strike 10 to 15 miles away can strike your area; and therefore it is **MANDATORY** to suspend or postpone athletic or recreational activities when determined necessary.

When using the “flash-to- bang method”, as the count approaches 30 seconds, all persons should be seeking or already inside appropriate shelter. This is the minimal guideline when using the flash-to-bang method to halt activities.

Criteria for Return to Activity

30-Minute Return-to-Play Rule

If a game, practice, or other activity is suspended or postponed due to lightning activity, it is important to establish criteria for resumption of activity. First off, the storm should continue to be monitored. Waiting at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder is warranted. Each time lightning is seen or thunder is heard the 30-minute rule will be applied. **A blue sky or lack of rainfall is not an adequate reason to resume play, as lightning can strike far from where it is raining.**

Seeking Appropriate Shelter

The primary choice for a safe location from lightning hazard is any substantial, frequently used building such as concession stands. The electrical and telephone wiring and plumbing pathways aid in grounding the building. The secondary choice for a safe location from lightning hazard is a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows closed. This would be the first choice at outdoor facilities as everyone can not fit in the concession stands. That is why it is vital to make the decision immediately so people have time to go to vehicles. You should avoid touching the sides of the vehicle. Convertible vehicles, golf carts, etc, are not adequate areas of shelter. You should avoid high places and open fields, isolated trees, rain or picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, flagpoles, bleachers, metal fences, convertibles, golf carts or any type of water. **Be aware**

that there may be physically disabled individuals or the elderly at these parks who can not move quickly, so make sure they are given enough time to vacate.

Individuals who feel their hair stand on end or skin tingle or hear crackling noises should assume the lightning-safe position. That position is crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered and ears covered. **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND.** You must minimize the amount of contact that you have with the ground.

Managing Victims of Lightning Strike

In an event that a person is struck by lightning proper care should be given. **Phone 911 immediately.** Because lightning-strike victims do not remain connected to a power source, they do not carry an electric charge and may be safely handled. However, personal safety must be considered before venturing into a dangerous situation to render care. If care is decided to be given, the first priority should be to move to victim to a safe location. It is imperative to treat lightning-victims promptly, as rescue breathing and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), along with the early defibrillation through use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED), has been proven to be successful and restart breathing and circulation. In the case of a lightning strike incident in which there are multiple victims, care should be administered to the apparently “dead” first. The following are recommended pre-hospital care for treating lightning-strike victims:

1. Survey the scene for safety
2. Carefully move the victim to a safe area, if needed.
3. Evaluate and treat for any breathing and/or circulation problems
4. Evaluate and treat for hypothermia and shock
5. Evaluate and treat for fractures
6. Evaluate and treat for burns.

Please adhere to the above policy. It will save a life. Many people ignore lightning. Lightning kills.

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